

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 CIEP-03 SAJ-01 EB-11 TRSE-00 COME-00

NIC-01 SIL-01 LAB-06 DRC-01 /126 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6888

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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USMISSION NATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION

REF: (A) ROME 10958; (B) ROME 12311

1. AS POLITICAL ACTIVITY RESUMES, MOST OBSERVERS AND POLITICIANS STILL EXPECT A GOVERNMENT CRISIS LIKELY THIS FALL, ALTHOUGH SOME, NOTABLY ANDREOTTI (RETEL), FEEL IT MAY BE AVOIDABLE WITH SOME CABINET RESHUFFLING.

2. HOWEVER, THE OBJECTIVE FACTORS WHICH COULD LEAD TO A CRISIS REMAIN. THE PSI REQUIREMENT FOR AT LEAST SOME SORT OF STRUCTURED CONSULTATION WITH THE PCI GO WELL BEYOND THE OFFICIAL DC POSITION, AND BASIC DIFFERENCES AMONG COALITION PARTNERS OVER HOW BEST TO CONFRONT ITALY'S SERIOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ARE BEING REAFFIRMED.

3. REGARDING ECONOMIC QUESTIONS, PRI LEADER LA MALFA ONCE
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AGAIN HAS WEIGHED IN WITH A VERY BEARISH VIEW OF GOI ABILITY

TO CONTROL INFLATION AND HAS SUGGESTED THE PRI MIGHT NOT BE
ABLE TO CONTINUE SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT UNLESS HEED IS TAKEN
OF PRI (I.E., LA MALFA'S) ECONOMIC VIEWS. IN A WIDELY
PUBLICIZED NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW SEPTEMBER 12, LA MALFA STATED
THAT MOST IN HIS PARTY, INCLUDING HIMSELF, ARE INCLINED TO PASS
TO THE OPPOSITION, EXASPERATED WITH THE OLD STORY OF BEING
RIGHT ON THE FACTS BUT UNABLE TO CHANGE THE COURSE OF EVENTS.
HE WENT ON TO DECLARE THE CENTER-LEFT DEAD, BUT RUEFULLY
ADDED THAT HE SEES NO VALID ALTERNATIVE. HE DOES NOT SEE
ENTRY OF THE PCI INTO THE AREA OF GOVERNMENT.
COMMENT: LA MALFA'S STATEMENT FOLLOWS HIS GLOOMY OPEN LETTER
TO PRIME MINISTER RUMOR AND A SERIES OF STATEMENTS HARSHLY
CRITICAL OF THE POLICIES OF THE OTHER PARTIES (BOTH
COALITION AND OPPOSITION) AND THE UNIONS. HIS LATEST
INTERVENTION MAY NOT HAVE INCREASED THE ODDS VERY MUCH
AGAINST THE CURRENT COALITION, BUT IT IS ANOTHER STRAW ON
THE BACK OF A VERY WARY GOVERNMENT. VOLPE

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